

BOWLING GREEN

Entrepreneurial Scholarships Keep Young Business Owners in State



Clinton Mills (left) and his twin brother Chris were honored last year by the U.S. Small Business Administration as Kentucky's Young Entrepreneurs of the Year.

A successful online business launched by two Bowling Green high school students will continue its growth in Kentucky thanks to the state's New Economy initiative and entrepreneurial scholarships from Western Kentucky University.

Clinton and Chris Mills are co-owners of Hitcents.com, an online advertising and marketing firm now in its third year of business. In 2001, the twins were honored by the U.S. Small Business Administration

as Kentucky's Young Entrepreneurs of the Year. Although the two considered attending institutions such as Stanford, Texas, Vanderbilt and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), they say that an attractive location for their company coupled with Kentucky's support of high-tech business persuaded them to remain in-state at Western Kentucky University.

Chris Mills will be the first recipient of Western's Don and Suzanne Vitale Entrepreneurial Scholarship. Clinton Mills will be the first to receive the school's Presidential Young Entrepreneurs Scholarship. The full scholarships include tuition, books, room meals and an international study experience.

WKU President Gary Ransdell lauded the Mills' company as a premier example of an "innovative, high-tech business that will promote economic development in south-central Kentucky. "

The success of Hitcents, which will be moving into Western's Center for Research and Development, could also attract similar companies to the Center.

"Getting the business in the new center with a larger facility alongside other high-tech businesses can only benefit both sides," said Ed Mills, the students' father. "The business can then expand into hiring more people [and] will probably employ fellow Western students so they too can enjoy the entrepreneurial atmosphere."